

**AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY (AHRQ)**  
**MEPS Data Users' Two-Day Workshop**  
**Medical Expenditure Panel Survey**  
**Estimation; Linking; Employment-Related Data; Hands-On Computer Lab**

**AHRQ**  
**540 Gaither Road, Rockville, MD 20850-6649**  
**November 30 and December 1, 2004**

**Workshop Description**

**Purpose**

This two-day workshop, with a maximum of 20 participants, will encompass four separate sessions.

- The **Estimation** session is designed to facilitate proper statistical analyses of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey-Household Component (MEPS-HC) public use data files by providing information on weights, variances, pooling of data across years, longitudinal analyses of panels, and other estimation-related issues.
- The **Linking** session is designed to facilitate the use of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey-Household Component (MEPS-HC) public use data files by describing procedures for linking MEPS data to external and internal data sources.
- The **Employment-Related** session is designed to provide information on the types of employment information available through MEPS, both from household data collection (Medical Expenditure Panel Survey-Household Component: MEPS-HC) and establishment data collection (Medical Expenditure Panel Survey-Insurance Component: MEPS-IC).
- The **Hands-On Computer Lab** will give participants the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in the other workshop sessions to their own research projects, using MEPS files and other publicly available data.

Each topic above will be covered in a half-day. On the afternoon of the second day, a PC will be available for each participant to allow for the construction of analytic files and tables related to the user's research interests.

**Who Should Attend**

This workshop is designed for researchers seeking help in creating data estimates using MEPS-HC data, including topics such as weights, variances, and using pooled and longitudinal data. It will also be of interest to researchers linking between MEPS-HC internal files (such as persons to conditions) or linking MEPS-HC with external data (such as the National Health Interview Survey [NHIS]). It is also designed for individuals who have an interest in becoming familiar with the various types of employment information collected from households (MEPS-HC) and from establishments (MEPS-IC).

Given the nature and pace of the workshop, attendees should have some prior exposure to MEPS programs and their outputs. In addition, in order to take full advantage of the hands-on computer time, data users should have a working knowledge of SAS programming techniques.

**Requirements**

All participants should read the *MEPS Workbook* (available on the MEPS Web site) prior to attending the workshop. The *MEPS Workbook* provides concise information about the MEPS-HC survey design and file content. Participants should also review the tables and technical note on the MEPS-IC Web site.

In order to maximize the time available for file construction, it will be helpful to participants if they review the MEPS-HC data file documentation and codebooks (also available on the MEPS Web site) prior to the workshop.

All work on the PCs using MEPS-HC files will be conducted in SAS, so participants should have a working knowledge of that software. Staff will be available to answer questions concerning MEPS data files and variables during the hands-on computer session, but due to time and personnel constraints we cannot provide programming services to participants for their individual projects.

## **Program Description**

Each of the four workshop sessions will be covered in a half-day. For the three topical sessions, participants will be provided a **half-day orientation consisting of lecture and review of SAS programming examples**. In the fourth session, participants will utilize the remaining **half-day of the workshop time for hands-on construction of data files or data tables on the provided computers**.

Additional instructional and reference materials will be distributed and discussed as necessary. All 2001 public use data files will be available on each participant's PC, as will the MEPS-IC tables and the MEPSnet analytic tools. (Please note that non-public use data will not be available at the workshop.) File documentation, codebooks, and the MEPS survey instrument will be available electronically. If participants prefer hard copies of these materials, they can be downloaded from the MEPS Web site and brought to the workshop by the participant. MEPS staff will be on-site at all times to answer questions.

## **Contact Information**

*E-mail program questions to:* [bcrimmel@ahrq.gov](mailto:bcrimmel@ahrq.gov)